

The Woman's Page of The Times-Dispatch

Woman's Sphere

"Woman's sphere" is a canting phrase on the lips of many who make use of it, because they have nothing better to say, because the tree of knowledge is a tree whose fruit has largely remained unplucked since the days of Eve and the Garden of Eden.

"Woman's sphere" is wherever woman's help is needed. Since when has woman not been a helper? In the home, yes, in its beautifying, in its comfort, in its sacredness and its tender memories—in all these things woman has done her part and the world around her has risen up and called her blessed, because she has magnified her power to help.

As a helper in the highways and the byways of life, oh, yes. Since when has woman failed of ministering to the sick and poor, of teaching the ignorant, of lightening the hard burden of toil, of harmonizing proportions and bringing order and confidence out of distrust and discord?

"Woman's sphere" is wherever woman the worker is called into requisition. Since when, in the order of creation, has woman the worker stood aside, and permitted others to do what has been apportioned as her heritage, her duty? Work in the home? Ah, yes, pleasantest and most imperative work of all. Work for the sake of loved ones, darning and sewing, economizing and educating, refining and training and developing the power of companionship and sympathy, with every line of interest along which work may be directed.

Working beyond the home sphere? Ah, yes, wherever work calls in the great outside, where there are shirtwaits to be tailored, evening gowns to be draped, children's garments to be fashioned, elegant wraps to be designed, where the clack, clack of the typewriter beats insistently upon the ear, where the whirr of the mill machinery goes round, where backs are bent in the fitting rooms of big mercantile establishments, where cigarettes are rolled and tobacco strings spun from its stem in mammoth manufacturing houses. Woman the worker is indispensable here, there and everywhere, in centers where the call awaits her presence.

"Woman's sphere" is wherever woman the inspirer, the idealist, the sentimentalist is needed, to preserve man's faith intact against the aggressive tendencies of commercialism, of latter day unfaith, of keen competition in business, of unscrupulous methods in practice, of unfairness in the position, of trickery, and of the feudalism of might against right. Since when has woman been afraid or ashamed to uphold and sustain, to take her place earnestly and openly on the side of right against might?

"Woman's sphere" is how is it to be measured? Within the limits of four walls? Ah, no. It is as broad as the world is wide. It is as long as the world is long. It knows no sectionalism, has cast aside the narrowness of prejudice, has sunk personality in the common good of humanity, has enlarged its borders, furnished its philosophy and speaks its influence through the lips of the humblest as well as through the utterances of a queen upon her throne.

"Woman's sphere" is beside little beds at night, with hushing utterances of prayer and folded hands, as "Our Father" falls from childish lips? Ah, yes. Beside children grown into manhood and womanhood, hastening them against disappointment, preserving intact their hope and joy and confidence in the goodness of the world and the opportunities of life. Equally, yes.

"Woman's sphere" is so small a thing is restrained, that it may be carried in the palm of the hand during the whole of a lifetime. So immeasurable a thing, if unfolded, and unrestricted that it may cover a vast host as the pillar of cloud, which entailed the people of Israel and hid them by the will of the Lord from the pursuing footsteps of their mighty and conquering enemies.

Shadow.
The shadow in her hair
Is dark and brown,
Like forest shadows there
Where boughs hang down,
Over dead leaves piled deep.

The shadow in her eyes
Is brown and clear,
Like the still glass that lies
In forest mere,
Over dead leaves sunk deep.

The shadow in her heart
One never sees,
She hides it with the art
Of tender ease,
Her heart is shadowed quite,
Yet all the while
About her shines the light
Of her kind smile—
Over dead hopes laid deep.
—Charlotte Perkins Gilman.

Life's Greatest Ideal.
It is not given to most women to look into the face of eternity in the middle of active life, and make a choice between life and death. Perhaps many women, so brought to instant decision, would see life's greatest ideal overshadowed all else—the ideal of self-forgetfulness, overflowing love for others.

Only the other day, a rarely lovely woman, dying by slow illness, said to a friend, "If while we are living our active lives in the world, we could learn the great lesson of love that comes to us only when we are facing eternity, how different our lives would be!"

Life Interferes. Confuses vision, hurries the days along until the real essentials are crowded out. That is why so many women and their lives petty, narrow and unlovely. The light of eternity, let in on any moment of life, reveals the deepest need of that moment—and the eternal, the deepest need is always more love.

The child needs love, not indulgence—a strong, pure, forward-looking love. Exchange.

Ovenless Baker.
A time-saver in the baking way is the hot iron plate with which baking can be done on the top of the stove. This also does away with the terrific heart of the regular oven. Potatoes, spaghetti, apples, custards, meat loaf, biscuits and almost anything that can be baked is placed in this hot plate, which is simply three pieces of heavy iron riveted together. The two outer pieces are separated from the inner one by a quarter-inch space, the whole forming a sort of drum. This plate is laid over the flame, and the food to be baked is placed in it. The whole is then covered with a heavy granite pan. As the whole principle of baking is to keep an even heat around the article, it is well to use a heavy iron skillet in addition to the hot plate.

A Prayer for the Women Who Toil

O God, we pray thee for our sisters who are leaving the ancient shelter of the home to earn their wage in the factory and the store amid the press of modern life. Save them from the strain of unremitting toil that would unfit them for the holy duties of home and motherhood, which the future may lay upon them. Give them grace to cherish under the new surroundings the old sweetness and gentleness of womanhood, and in the rough mingling of life to keep their hearts pure and their lives untarnished. Save them from the terrors of utter woe. Teach them to stand loyally by their sisters, that by united action they may better their common lot.

If it must be so that our women toil like men, help us still to reverence in them the mothers of the future. But make us determined to shield them from unequal burdens, that the women of our nation be not drained of strength and hope for the enrichment of a few, lest our homes grow poor in the widely sweetness and motherly love which have been the saving strength and glory of our country. To such as yearn for the love and sovereign freedom of their own home, grant in due time the fulfillment of their sweet desires. By Mary, the beloved, who bore the world's redemption in her bosom, by the memory of our own dear mothers who kissed our souls awake by the little daughters who must soon go out into that world which we are now fashioning for others, we beseech thee that we may deal aright by all women.

—By Walter Ranschenbusch.

Family Wash a Specialty.
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FAMILIES NEED CLOSER ASSOCIATION

Not long ago, one of four sisters lost her husband, who had been a devoted partner. He left her childless and hopelessly lonely. Naturally she turned to her sisters.

One had married a struggling artist. They lived in a studio. She was afraid "dear Nellie" would not enjoy the atmosphere. Why didn't Nellie go in for some sort of career? It would prove an antidote.

Sister No. 2 offered "dear Nellie" a beautifully furnished room in her well-appointed home; but, of course, Nellie must understand that they were a busy family. Janet was about to be married. Her troupe was under way. Caroline was engaged in cultivating her voice. Now if "dear Nellie" would go in for settlement work, or something of that sort, she would find occupation.

Occupation! Always occupation! Not one of these absorbed, ambitious women realized that what their baby-widowed sister needed and wanted was sympathy, interest and affection. In discussing the situation, the widow said with pathetic resignation that they had grown apart; that she had been as absorbed in her husband as they in theirs.

But even so was wrong. They had not grown apart with advancing years. They had never really grown together. These four sisters. They had been brought up to think each of her individual interests, her individual pleasures, her individual future.

The cure for this growing national evil?

A little leisure and a little love in the nursery, the living room and the parlor. On the part of parents, a little less emphasis on the importance of "succeeding," a little less cultivation of the brain and the commercial instinct, and a little more encouragement of loving understanding among children. A little less individuality and a great deal more of mutual interest and dependence. Perhaps even fewer "advantages" and more evenings round the family fireside—if there is one. If not, try a library table with books and games.

No, on second thought, don't wait for freight and cozy winter evenings.

Table Decoration.
Jane Calhoun has some specially fresh and attractive designs in table decoration among a generally fine table of contents for Harper's Bazaar. Here are some of the designs:

A Daisy Table.

In a birch-bark basket daisies are grouped. Loops of smilax outline the basket, and for height the basket rests on a stand hidden by smilax. Daisy blossoms stud the outline at intervals. Large crystal holders, with white candles, flank the main scheme on either side. These wax candles are left unshaded, as this gives a prouder effect with the daisies, while candleholders should hide the centerpiece. Six candles may be used.

Just Laughed at Me.

When the baby came to our house, I thought my Pa was daft. He pranced around the house all day—But Ma, she only laughed.

He bragged to all the neighbors, and He bragged to all the men. He said it was the smartest kid—But Ma just laughed again.

The baby ain't so much, I think; I heard my Pa say so.

I told Ma that I did, an' she I told Ma that I did, an' she I told Ma that I did, an' she

But Ma just laughed again.

The baby looks like me, I guess; I heard my Pa say so.

I told Ma that I did, an' she I told Ma that I did, an' she I told Ma that I did, an' she

But Ma just laughed again.

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Pathos of Old Age

I knew a dear old soul who had had her home broken up, her children married and gone, the loving partner of forty years taken away from her, and nothing left but to close the old house and go, first to one and then to another. Can anything be more pathetic than to be thus stranded? A whole lifetime of living for others! A house in which a very world of life seemed to go on through years and years, with countless ones coming in and out to be blessed! And then to see it all at an end, all gone, even the house, and the lonely, bereft one standing outside the door as homeless as any who never had a home! For the aged are not received kindly at the hearthstones of the young. It is not home they find. You have seen that look of dumb amazement in old women left like this. Is it any wonder?

This old lady and I were speaking of a neighbor who was finding the care of an aged mother a miserable and intolerable burden. She had abundant means, and so had the old mother, but the presence of the mother was what was resented. It seemed money just could not be afforded for even her necessities, though her own ample funds were in her children's hands. My friend looked at me with great tears in her eyes. "But she bore that child," she cried, her old face quivering with pitiful indignation. I had to smile; it was such a good word. Yes, she had "borne" the daughter and had been a good mother, and soon a comfortable competency would more than reward the few months of care she had been. But what was murmuring and complaining, with what reproaches, her helpless days and nights were filled. She could not die, though she prayed God to take her, and when he did not, suffered her life with such patience that even the daughter could not fail to see it. But there were times when she cried. Did you ever witness the silent, pitiful crying of age?

What went to my heart was to hear the daughter, because the old lady and the wisdom of few words, represent her mother as mentally weak, and to see her have to sit and listen to it. And in a less outspoken way, it is like this that so many old people are treated. Their opinion is not regarded; they are not even permitted to express one, talk going on right over their heads. They are not considered to know much or to have like or dislikes. If they have, they're no right to them. As to pleasures, it is taken for granted that they need none, being old and not eating. There is no use to trouble to ask them.

But there are those who know that age is not as empty as younger years choose to suppose it. Old people have only arrived at the place where the things of the world are estimated at their true value. Age discriminates with Epictetus between joy and pleasure. Joy it has; pleasure it has let drop away as the more real things have taken their place. It still cares, still enjoys, but the things are different. And realizing that youth and middle age will come to the same place in time, it is quiet. Talk would be unavailing, protest only bringing turmoil about its patient head. It is wisdom age has learned, and wisdom to youth is only a sort of stupidity. So age must be treated with the patience and indignity youth itself would not tolerate. Think how the least show of disrespect, especially from one younger than ourselves, offends us: How we fire up! It is not to be borne from any; but from one younger, it is intolerable! Yet we forget this. We do not consider that we are inflicting wounds, the harder to be borne for all that it comes, the life of labor and sacrifice that lies behind—Harper's Bazar.

Beautiful in Texture and Color.
For the tailored linen suits new models have been appearing each week. No other material is used so much this year for traveling, shipping, and generally useful suits.

A smart cream linen frock has a unique collar scooped at the edge, as are also three blouses. The design is a heavy artistic one, with fancy buttons and macramé lace on the waist.

The linens are especially beautiful in texture and color this season, and the rough weaves which are most fashionable will be worn into the early autumn days.

For the many social events of which the August mornings in the country are so full the trimmed linen frock is most suitable.

Fashion Hints

Fans are out of fashion, and yet how pleasant a wave of fresh air would be during these stormy evenings, and let some one has invented the fan composed of natural, living flowers—most delightful of fans, fragrant and cool, made in flowers to match the dress; nosegay and fan in one.

Many elegantes choose their own style of coiffure to suit their physiognomy, but the favorite headdress in the colour a la grecque, where the hair is made wavy at the temples and kept in on either side by combs.

Another new way of arranging the hair consists in a coil of hair rolled smoothly round the head, and from which escapes an immense bunch of hair in disorder, or a great mass of curls.

With broad hats, when the weather is cool, a marabout boa may be worn fastened off at the back with a bunch of ribbon, while a rather long end is left to float in the wind; some, indeed, have very long ends. For the evening it is certainly prudent to wear such boas.

Exquisite Headgear.
Heron's tufts and birds of Paradise are worn along on a broad hat. Under the hat is black and white it must be in one color.

What exquisite headgear the milliners have started this season, adorned with priceless, airy, nothing! An aigrette, a wing, or a bow, stiff and pointing straight skyward, gives an air of slenderness and lightness to the wearer.

Black and white are certainly favorites. A large shape turned up on one side, with an aigrette rising erect just in the centre, or else a fluffy circle of feathers, clipped like a fringe, encircling the crown, with just one pointed straight skyward, gives an air of slenderness and lightness to the wearer.

Fonticello Water.

AUGUST DESERTS.

Current Nectar.

This is a delicious summer beverage. To one quart of water add two cups of tart currant jelly. Boil till dissolved; then add the juice of three lemons and three oranges. Serve very cold, with a slice of orange floating on top of each glass, and cracked ice enough to chill it.

Raspberry Mint.

To one quart of lemonade add one-half cupful of raspberries and the leaves from a sprig of mint. Chill for two hours, and serve in tall glasses, each of which is garnished with a floating sprig of mint. Cracked ice may be added.

Strawberry Parfait.

Whip a quart of thick cream with a small cup of sugar; when stiff mix in half a pint of strawberry juice. Turn into an ice cream mould; press the lid down carefully, pack in salt and ice, and freeze for three hours. At serving time, arrange it in glasses and serve immediately.

Cherry Mousse.

To a pint of double cream and three tablespoonsful of condensed milk, add a cupful of cherry juice, and a drop or two of almond extract. Chill on ice, then whip until stiff. Turn into a mould cover securely, and bury in a pan of ice and salt for two hours. Serve in glasses.—Mary Northend.

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